MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
ARIZONA ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS TASK FORCE
May 3, 2007
1:30 p.m., MST

The Arizona English Language Learners (ELL) Task Force met in Room 1 of the Arizona Senate Building, 1700 W. Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona. Mr. Alan Maguire, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:38 p.m. MST.

1. Call to Order
>   Present:
>   Mr. Alan Maguire, Chairman
>   Dr. John Baracy
>   Mr. Jim DiCello
>   Dr. Eugene Garcia
>   Ms. Margaret Garcia Dugan
>   Ms. Johanna Haver
>   Ms. Eileen Klein
>   Ms. Karen Merritt
>   Ms. Anna Rosas

A quorum was present for the purpose of conducting business.

2. Approval of March 14, 2007 minutes of Task Force meeting

Mr. Alan Maguire reviewed the Task Force minutes of March 14, 2007. Ms. Johanna Haver noted that her name had been misspelled on page two in the last sentence and requested a correction to the minutes. A motion was made by Mr. Jim DiCello and seconded by Ms. Margaret Garcia Dugan to approve of the minutes of March 14, 2007 as amended. The minutes were unanimously approved. Dr. Eugene Garcia and Dr. John Baracy arrived after the minutes were approved.

3. Presentation and Discussion of the Development of English Language Learner Models' Components

Mr. Maguire requested that Mr. Kevin Clark continue the discussion on model components. Mr. Clark presented a brief overview of the three primary objectives of the meeting. The first objective was to review survey findings presented at the April 26th meeting. He stated that by briefly reviewing the survey data, Task Force members could compare current practices in Arizona's most successful English Language Learners (ELL) programs to the ELL model under consideration. The second objective was to synthesize information about the four ELL model components, through the translation of policy into principles, principles into structure, and

structure into classroom practices. The third objective was to present an example of the discrete English skills index which teachers would be able to use in teaching English Language Development (ELD). Mr. Clark stated that once the Task Force endorsed the components of the model(s), he would then be able to show what the model(s) look like when applied to schools with varying ELL populations and organizational configurations, such as high school, elementary K-5, and middle school.

Mr. Clark began the discussion on the comparison of current ELL program practices to the proposed ELL model components by referring members to page three of a five page handout. Page three is entitled *Comparison of Current Practices and Draft Model Components*. See (Attachment A). Mr. Clark indicated that the shaded rows **a** thru **e** signify elements required by statute. The non-shaded rows showed additional elements of interest identified by Task Force members. Dr. Garcia noted that the expectation of reclassifying ELLs in one year stated in column **d** was not addressed in the ELL survey. He recommended rewording column **d** to: "Expectation of proficiency in one year."

Rows **f**, *4 hours of ELD driven by ELL Proficiency Standards and Discrete Skills Inventory (DSI),* and **g**, *Instructional time allocations driven by the ELL Proficiency Standards and DSI* were not shaded. These two elements are recommended for inclusion in the proposed ELL model because they are consistent with statute and are the foundation for Arizona's English Language Learner Assessment (AZELLA). To date, Task Force members have discussed elements in rows **a** through **g** as proposed model components. Elements in rows **h**, *Teacher endorsement requirement*, **i**, *Class size*, **j**, *Training on DSI content*, **k,** *Training on methods for teaching DSI*, and **l**, *Identification of materials needed for DSI* have not been discussed.

Dr. Garcia stated that the ELL program components have not been adopted as yet, but merely discussed. He shared concerns that some ELL practitioners in the field were under the impression that the program components had been formally adopted by the Task Force. Mr. Clark concurred that the Task Force has not formally adopted the ELL program components. However, he reminded members that the shaded components are not changeable because they are in statute. Mr. Clark proceeded to page two entitled *Program Model Rationale (Grades 1-12)*. He reviewed the six categories in the first column: *Course Focus; Skills Measured by AZELLA; As % of ELL Proficiency Standards; Research Conclusions; Research Base;* and *Recommended Time Allocation per Grade Span*. Under the categories of *Research Base* and *Research Conclusions*, Mr. Clark cited the research findings on time allocations/time-on-task for learning specific, discrete language skills and reviewed the percentage of incidence of the various discrete skills integrated within the ELL Proficiency Standards. He noted that there is a percentage range of discrete skills within the ELL standards and that the range addresses the various grade bands within the standards and the range of performance objective requirements within those bands.

Dr. Garcia asked if any of the research supported this type of concentrated time blocks. Mr. Clark replied that the research addresses the question of teaching discrete skills, such as grammar skills, vocabulary, etc. He stated that *Program Model Rationale (Grades 1-12)* handout was a cursory research literature review of empirical data that supports the teaching of discrete

language skills, such as grammar using a specified time allocation. Dr. Garcia requested that Mr. Clark provide more research data, specifically addressing time blocks and skills sequencing. Mr. DiCello identified a typo on the time allocation in the *English Writing* column. It should state 15 to 45 minutes on English Writing for elementary grades 1-6, instead of 60 minutes. Mr. Clark noted the correction.

Mr. Clark stated that by using the components of the generic draft model and applying the same components to schools with varying ELL populations, the generic model becomes multiple models. Ms. Johanna Haver asked if different activities, such as science instructional materials, could be integrated into ELD instruction. Mr. Clark said that all language is taught within a context, and that a thorough reading of the ELL Proficiency Standards shows the instructional context. For example, in an ELD vocabulary class, the students might review the <u>names</u> of the parts of a cell. Later in a science content class, these same ELL students might learn <u>how</u> a cell functions.

Ms. Garcia Dugan stated that specific time allocations need to be provided as a guide so that teachers know what percentage of time they should allocate to each language development component. Dr. Garcia commented that all of ELD is driven by the ELL Proficiency Standards. Mr. Clark agreed and stated that the impetus for allocating blocks of time for different skills instruction came from training blocks used by teachers and by universities and other higher education institutions to organize course hours for accreditation in each area of study. Ms. Haver stated that time allocations need to be emphasized because consistent time allocations standardize ELD instruction so that one can go to any classroom in Arizona and know the focus of ELD instruction. Mr. Clark noted that the survey respondents did not indicate that teachers were teaching the ELL standards at all, including the four hours of ELD instruction. Ms. Garcia Dugan stated that if the model or models are more prescriptive in the beginning, once teachers become more familiar with the instructional content, they can be more creative in their ELD instruction. At present, however, there have been complaints that teachers have not been taught how to use the ELL Proficiency Standards. Dr. Garcia stated that learning how to teach the standards required professional development. Ms. Garcia Dugan agreed that once the models are approved, there will be a professional development component in the implementation plan. Ms. Anna Rosas commented that ADE has offered multiple trainings on the ELL standards, but that not all teachers have had the opportunity to participate.

Dr. Garcia asked if teachers could administer a mid-year assessment of language proficiency. He asked that if mid-year assessment is allowed, does this provision need to be mentioned as a component of the model. Mr. Clark stated that it was feasible that a student could be tested mid-year with AZELLA and, if the student received a composite score of proficient, the student could be transferred into mainstream classrooms. Ms. Haver expressed a concern about English language grouping and separating ELLs from native English speakers for four hours a day. She questioned whether the remaining two hours of non-ELD instruction would provide enough academic content. Mr. Clark said that by using the ELL standards, the more proficient an ELL student becomes, the more academic Language Arts content can be provided by the ELD teacher.

Mr. Clark referred to the "on-ramp to content" graphic that represents the "General Relationship Between English Language Development (ELD) and Academic Content" (Attachment B.)

Mr. Clark referred the task force members to page four of his five page handout entitled *SEI Discrete English Skills Sequence*. This handout presented an example of the skill sequence within one performance objective for the first and second grade "Delivery of Oral Communications" standard. The performance objective was for communicating personal needs. He showed the Task Force members that a simple task such as greeting or leave-taking is actually a very complex set of lessons on parts of speech, such as common nouns; verbs ["to be"], imperatives ["Stop! Help!"], infinitives ["to like, to want, to wait"], simple present ["play, look"], present progressive ["am playing, are looking"], irregular past tense ["ran, ate, rode"]; linking verbs; pronouns (subjective ["I"], objective ["me, you, him, her, us, them"]; adjectives (e.g., "words describing color, size, shape, texture"); conjunctions ["or, and, but"]; and simple adverbs ["sadly, quickly"]. In addition, several lessons are required on pronunciation.

Mr. Clark stated that if the ELL Proficiency Standards are the freeway for gaining English proficiency on AZELLA, then the discrete skills are the surface roads. He was asked by members if the discrete skills sequence would help teachers "unpack" the standards for ELD instruction. Dr. Garcia stated that the fact that many ELL students have these skills in their native language is absent from the discussion about the importance of using discrete skills. He said that these students are simply missing the "tags" in English. Dr. Garcia added that in many cases a teacher is not teaching concepts, but teaching students how to use what they already know in a new language. Ms. Haver commented that the discrete skills index seems helpful and that the index would help break down for teachers what they need to teach. Dr. Garcia agreed, but thought it would be more helpful to tie the lesson to content, teaching not just nouns, but certain types of nouns for the planned lesson. Mr. Clark agreed and stated that the handout demonstrated this idea. The ability to greet and take-leave appropriately is one of the first language skills in the ELL Proficiency Standards within the Listening and Speaking domain. As students progress through the various proficiency objectives, they encounter grade-appropriate Language Arts academic content.

Mr. Clark directed Task Force members to return to page three entitled *Comparison of Current Practices and Draft Model Components* and stated that the discrete skills index could be placed under both **g,** *Instructional time allocations driven by ELL Proficiency Standards and DSI (Discrete Skills Inventory),* and under **j,** *Training on DSI content*. These two components address teacher training. Ms. Eileen Klein commented that she wasn't sure how prescriptive the models needed to be. She asked how much an SEI endorsement would prepare teachers to teach each of the four hour blocks of ELD as defined by the discrete skills inventory and the ELL Proficiency Standards. Mr. Maguire replied that he considered the shaded area (**a** thru **e**) the required components that the model must encompass, and he considered the critical question to be how many items down the list the Task Force needs to include as additional parts of the model. At some point, to be determined by the Task Force, the Department of Education will become responsible for the implementation process, which is beyond the role of the Task Force. Mr. Clark asked if the development of the model should proceed with the inclusion of the

discrete skills index. Mr. Maguire replied that yes, he thought that the discrete skills index would be helpful for professional development on how to teach the objectives in the standards. There was general agreement among the Task Force to include the discrete skills index.

The next discussion addressed component **h,** *Teacher endorsement requirement.* Ms. Garcia Dugan expressed concern about the Task Force making any rules about teacher certifications or endorsements. She said that new certification or endorsement requirements should be left to the districts so that the need for any required professional development doesn't create more hardship and result in the lack of teacher availability.   She also reminded members that the State and Federal government already have guidelines and requirements in No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Dr. Garcia disagreed. He stated that the model under discussion needs teachers with very specific skills. Dr. Garcia stated that if the Task Force is prescribing how ELD is to be taught, it should prescribe the type of teacher capable of teaching the material. Ms. Rosas expressed concern that districts may have trouble finding enough qualified teachers, and that this type of prescriptive instruction may not be practical. Dr. Garcia stated that if the models are to ensure that ELLs become proficient in one year, experienced, qualified teachers are needed to implement the models. He suggested having a transitional period similar to NCLB to allow districts time to hire the qualified staff. Ms. Haver suggested creating a professional development plan to teach the skills necessary. Ms. Garcia Dugan said she preferred not to concentrate on degrees or endorsements, but on teachers who have the desire to teach ELLs. She stated that teachers who want to teach ELLs tend to take the training required. Ms. Garcia Dugan expressed concern that requiring certain certifications would exclude excellent teachers, and that local districts may have better knowledge about who makes an excellent teacher.

Dr. Garcia requested that if Task Force members speak in public forums about the process of adopting SEI Program models, they need to clearly state that models are under discussion and have not yet been finalized or adopted. Mr. Maguire responded that in his presentations to various ELL practitioner groups, he used the phrase that he was expressing his "observation of Task Force activities."

4. Presentation and Discussion of Upcoming Task Force Activities

Mr. Maguire asked Mr. Clark to prepare some information on certifications so that the Task Force might study this idea more thoroughly. Mr. Clark stated he would prepare an annotated bibliography providing empirical, experimental, or quasi-experimental study data with clear citations speaking to time allocations. He would not be conducting a global search, but a specific search for research that supports the elements of the proposed model. He stated he will also work on showing how a model like this would look at schools of different ELL populations. On the May 17 meeting, he suggested inviting some ELL practitioners who have implemented similar models. Mr. Maguire and members of the Task Force indicated their support for inviting ELL practitioners. Mr. Clark recommended that after the ELL practitioners' presentation, the Task Force could explore and develop implementation guidelines. Dr. John Baracy requested

that materials be provided one or two days before meetings to allow better preparation and examination of materials.

5. Call to the Public

Mr. Maguire made a call to the public at 3:13 p.m. There was no public testimony.

6. Adjournment

Mr. Alan Maguire, Chairman, adjourned the May 3, 2007 meeting at 3:13 p.m.

Arizona ELL Task Force

Alan Maguire, Chairman
August 15, 2007